

IMPORTANCE OF THE DIETARY HABITS IN RELATION TO PREVENTION OF MALNUTRITION

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ABSTRACT

Child malnutrition is a major public health concern worldwide, leading to higher morbidity and mortality. It is mostly preventable through public health and economic development. Malnutrition refers to the situation where there is an unbalanced diet in which some nutrients are in excess, lacking or wrong proportion. Simply put, we can categorise it to be under-nutrition and over-nutrition. Nutrition effects on children's physical, cognitive and behavioral development. Television and computer game exposure affect children's sleep and deteriorate verbal and cognitive performance which support the hypothesis of the negative influence of media on consumption of children sleep, learning and memory. Most of the childhood obesity prevention efforts have focused on school age children and have had limited success. In the present study importance of dietary habits in children is discussed.

Key words: Malnutrition, dietary habits, importance.

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INTRODUCTION

In India malnutrition is one of the major health problems where children are suffering from malnutrition with a view of reducing and controlling. malnutrition the peripheral workers can play a vital role in improving the nutritional status of mother and children. thus, for reducing nutrition. from community the community members should work hard to reduce from community the community members should work hard to reduce ignorance and illiteracy in rural respective area. They should also try to develop healthy culture and customs on the issue of malnutrition every develop healthy culture and customs on the issue of malnutrition every member of health system to the more efforts. It is a lack of proper nutrition, caused by not having enough to eat, not eating enough of the right things, or being unable to use the food that one does eat.

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Under nutrition

Under nutrition is a consequence of consuming too few essential nutrients or using or excreting them more rapidly than they can be replaced.

Over nutrition

Over nutrition results from eating too much, eating too many of the wrong things, not exercising enough, or taking too many vitamins or other dietary replacements

General Symptoms of malnutrition

Growth failure. This may be manifested as failure to grow at a normal expected rate in terms of weight, height or both Irritability, sluggishness and excessive crying along with behavioral changes like anxiety, attention deficit are common in children with malnutrition.

The skin becomes dry and flaky and hair may turn dry, dull and straw like in appearance. In addition, there may be hair loss as well.

Muscle wasting and lack of strength in the muscles. Limbs may appear stick like. Swelling of the abdomen and legs. The abdomen is swollen because of lack of strength of the muscles of the abdomen. This causes the contents of the abdomen to bulge out making the abdomen swollen. Legs are swollen due to edema. This is caused due to lack of vital nutrients. These two symptoms are seen in children with severe malnutrition. There are classically two types of protein energy malnutrition (PEM) in children. These are Marasmus and Kwashiorkor.

Characteristics of Marasmus and Kwashiorkor.

Marasmus

- Chronic or persistent diarrhea
- Distended abdomen
- Dizziness, Dry, peeling skin
- Emaciated appearance (unlike Kwashiorkor)
- Failure to achieve an appropriate weight to age/size
- Fatigue
- Severe weight loss and wasting
- Ribs prominent
- Limbs emaciated
- Muscle wasting
- May have good appetite
- With correct treatment, good prognosis

Kwashiorkor

- Abdominal swelling, distension or bloating
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Frequent infections
- Generalized swelling
- Hair and nail changes, including brittle, reddish hair and ridged nails that are thin and soft
- Irritability
- Muscle wasting

- Skin changes, including pigment loss, red or purple patches, peeling, cracking, skin sloughing, and the development of sores
- Slowed growth leading to short stature
- Weight loss
- Stunted growth
- Delayed puberty
- Impaired immunity
- Peripheral edema

Good practice to prevent malnutrition

- Food preparation will be carried out on hygienic surfaces
- All food will be handled using clean hand
- Vegetables will be washed before cooking food
- Vessels are cleaned before cooking food-
- Prepare the food according to the taste of the child
- Providing maximum home made food
- Serving new food with favorite foods to increase acceptance-
- Use more fruits in a day
- Provide age-appropriate food size

Prevention and management of malnutrition in preschool children

- Wash and sanitize work counters and surfaces before and after use
- Wash and sanitize cutting boards and utensils before using and after each use.
- Use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meats than the ones you use for fruits, vegetables, and other foods.
- Wash and sanitize can openers after each use
- Put frozen meats into a pan before placing them in the refrigerator to thaw
- Cook meats thoroughly
- Store uncooked food in a safe and dry place
- Protect from insects, rodents and other animals
- Avoid contact between raw food stuffs and cooked food
- Keep areas clean where child take food, and play

Children between the ages of 1 and 5 have small stomachs and high energy needs. Having small, frequent meals and snacks throughout the day can help establish a routine, keep their energy levels up, and help develop healthy eating patterns. Having regular meals and snacks helps establish a healthy routine, which is especially important as children get older. Eating meals together as a family has been linked to healthier food choices in children and adolescents. Family meals are a healthy routine which provide children with comfort and security about food. Shared meals are an opportunity to pass along family traditions and help keep families connected and communicating

Best practice to serve the food to the child

- Serve foods on a plate, napkin or bowl rather than directly on the table
- Discard cracked or chipped plates, cups, and bowls
- Use serving utensils such as large spoons, tongs, or single-use food service gloves
- Teach children not to lick serving utensils. If a utensil is licked, remove it and replace with a clean utensil
- Give children clean utensils and napkins if these items are dropped during the meal or snack

Management:

- Eating a nutritious, well-balance diet
- Discussing symptoms with your health care provider
- Drinking properly sanitized water

Following the recommended treatment course for infections

- Measure the weight regularly
- Additional calorie has to be given based on the requirement
- Improve the nutritional status of the child
- Provide protein content diet more
- Treat worm infestation
- Immunization according to age group with outskipping
- Treat anemia by iron and folic acid and iron content foodstuffs

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